

Entering into the Very Heart of Jesus

John 17

"Consequently He is able for all time to save those who approach God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them." Hebrews 7:25

"It is Christ Jesus, Who died, yes, Who was raised, Who is at the right hand of God, Who intercedes for us." Romans 8:34

"If I could hear Christ praying for me in the next room, I would not fear a million enemies. Yet distance makes no difference. He is praying for me." Robert McCheyene

How does Jesus pray for us?

1. He prayed that we would not be separated from the world.

It is possible to go from womb to tomb in a hermetically sealed container decorated with fish stickers.

2. He prayed that we could grow in maturity.

Sanctification means to separate or set apart for God's specific purpose.

3. He prayed that we would be unified as a church.

Why would Jesus make this a priority in His final prayer before the cross?

For our benefit:

What does unresolved conflict do?

It blocks my relationship with God.

"If anyone says, 'I love God,' yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen." 1 John 4:20, 21

It prevents answered prayers.

"Husbands, if you don't treat your wife right, forget about praying." 1 Peter 3:7

It hinders my happiness.

"You are only hurting yourself with your anger." Job 18:4

For the benefit of the non-churched:

"How will the world believe that Jesus was sent by God? Not if we agree with each other. Not if we are unanimous on each vote. Not if we never make a doctrinal error. But if we Love one another." Max Lucado

"Divisions in the church breed atheism in the world." Thomas Manton

"We must make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace." Ephesians 4:3

"There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to him: haughty eyes,

a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a person who stirs up conflict in the community." Proverbs 6:16-19

Principle of unity:

Conflict happens. "If your brother sins against you go and show him his fault." Matthew 18:15

Own Responsibility. "If you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you (for something you have done to him), leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother, then come and offer your gift." Matthew 5:23, 24

Don't avoid the person you are in conflict with.

Peacemaking is not avoiding. It is not appeasement.

"People with hot temper do foolish things; wiser people remain calm." Proverbs 14:17

Attack the problem not the person.

"A gentle answer quiets anger but a harsh one stirs it up." Proverbs 15:1

Ground rules for fighting fair: Never compare. Condemn. Command. Challenge. Condescend. Contradict. Confuse.

No third parties. "Try to live in peace with everyone; work hard at it." Psalms 34:14

"I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to agree with each other in the Lord." Philippians 4:2

Aim at reconciliation.

Reconciliation – to re-establish the relationship.

Resolution: To resolve every issue.

"God has reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation." 2 Corinthians 5:18

"Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else. 1 Thessalonians 5:15

"Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing." 1 Peter 3:9

"Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love. Where there is injury, pardon. Where there is doubt, faith. Where there is despair, hope. Where there is darkness, light. Where there is sadness, joy. O Divine master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console. To be understood, as to understand. To be loved, as to love. For it is in giving we receive. It is in pardoning that we are pardoned. It is in dying that we are born to eternal life." Saint Francis of Assisi